

SBARA's Groundplane



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The monthly Newsletter of the South Bay Amateur Radio Association

It was 5:03, October 17th, 1989 and I was at my home, speaking with a perspective client about a software development project for her firm. My four month old was napping in the crib, and my wife was tending to our three year old. A minute later, the Loma Prieta earthquake came. I was born and raised in the Bay Area so earthquakes were nothing new to me. For the first five seconds, I stood there, taking in the shaking and rumbling, waiting for it to stop. For the next five seconds, panic welled up in me. It seemed apparent that this may be the big one. My wife collected our two boys and took action. Although the quake was over in just 15 seconds, it was painfully obvious to me that I wasn't ready for the kind of emergency that would follow had the quake continued.

In another example, I was taking an afternoon nap on my couch when the door bell rang. When I answered the door, I saw my next-door neighbor's twelve year old boy in a panic telling me that his house was on fire. I followed him to his house, which appeared fine, then went inside. There was smoke billowing out from the back bedroom where a fire had been started. The mother was trying desperately to dial 911, but couldn't because she was in a panic. I took over, called 911, and escorted the family out of the house.

In both scenarios, there were people at risk and unable to respond properly to the situation and people who were able to take charge when it was needed. During an emergency, how well will we fair? How do we

get prepared for action when needed? It all comes down to what I like to call, "muscle memory." It is all about automatically responding to a situation without thinking too hard. This comes from constant practice. The practice of fire drills is something that will develop this muscle memory needed when the time comes.

As Amateurs, we have an advantage of radio communication during an emergency, which is especially useful when cell towers are down and power is out. But should such a disaster befall us, how many would be able to respond properly? What frequencies do you monitor? How will emergency services be reached?

Fortunately, we have ARES and RACES at our disposal. So this month, SBARA has asked representatives from the Tri-Cities emergency communications groups to be our keynote panel at the July meeting. This meeting will focus on Emergency Communications. Our three local ARES Emergency Coordinators from Fremont, Newark and Milpitas will discuss "Are You Ready for the Worst?" We'll learn about what's critical and how best to communicate during a disaster.

Whether directly or indirectly, all Amateurs should learn what they can do to participate and what they can do to prepare for an emergency.

..Jim



Special Interest...

- Field Day Recap
- HR Quiet?
- Hayward Zucchini Festival
- VE Group News
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The Groundplane

SBARAs Field Day Retrospect

SBARAs Field Day was great !!Lots of SBARA member participation and we had many guests. Friday, 16 people came to help set up the 80, 40 20 and 15 Meters antennas, equipment and tents. For the Friday work crew and potluck dinner Saturday, Harry Lau KF6QAK brought all the drinks and ice and a tub to put them in. Rita KI6SSQ brought some fresh picked plums. For lunch I cooked 32 hot dogs with all the fixings. With all the hard work the gang had done there were some hungry workers. The hot dogs, plums and potato chips didn't last long as you can imagine!

I slept in the park Friday night to keep an 'eye' on our stuff. Bernhard AE6YN also stayed and let me use one of his two tents so I didn't have to set up mine in the dark. Ugh! Then Saturday morning we finished the "fine tuning" of the antennas with my Vector Network Analyzer. We were on the air at 11:00AM when Field Day officially started.

The 15M station was switched between being the GOTA and 15M station as part of our 3A category. The 40-meter station was on pretty much all 24 hours. The 20-meter station was on until the band went dead at 10PM Saturday night, at which time we switched it over to 80M. I didn't start operating until around 10PM when the main rush to operate died down.

Sam WS6S and I were on 80M LSB when around 11PM who walks in but Bob Vallio W6RGG our Pacific Division ARRL Director. He chatted with us for a long time and even got on the mike and made a few contacts with us. He had visited East Bay Field Day sites all day long and was wrapping it up with our visit and then up to Vargas Ranch to visit the W6V team. He said that if SBARA would like him to come to a meeting and make a presentation he would love to do it.

Potluck was wonderful. Steve KA6S picked up all the rented tables and chairs in the morning and returned them on Sunday. We had two

Chinese entrees, Beef Broccoli and Orange Chicken. In addition we had one Indian entree, Chicken Curry. People brought side dishes and salads and desserts. Your cookies were the hit of the dessert layout. People raved about them! Thanks for all the baking you did for SBARA FD.

Finally climbed into my tent at 3AM Sunday morning only to be woken up by Steve KA6S at 6:30AM with a hot cup of coffee for me, which was really appreciated. I got up and started working 40M CW while drinking my coffee.

We operated right up until 11AM Sunday morning when we started the teardown process. Preliminary count shows that we made around 1200 contacts. Lots of new operators this year, the bulk of them attended the Wednesday night N1MM training session and the others were from the great job the GOTA coaches did at turning out confident new operators.

I was so tired that I fell asleep when I got home at 1PM Sunday. Basically slept until Monday morning. Now what is left are all the antennas, tents, tables, chairs, etc to put away.

Missed you. Hope you can make it next year. Have a safe trip home from Texas and hope to see you soon.

73,

AI

Wt6k

Editors Note: Look forward to seeing you at the next SBARA Meeting Ken!!

Drive careful!

The Groundplane

Hayward Zucchini Festival

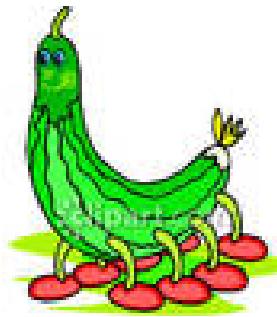
The call is going out for SBARA members to once again volunteer at the Hayward Zucchini Festival on August 21st and 22nd. For every shift you work earns SBARA money to help continue our programs.

The leadership team is asking those of you who haven't yet to consider signing up for a shift on August 21st and 22nd. We are planning to contact every member in August to request his or her support in this important fundraiser. Please consider saying yes when you're called by the SBARA telephone tree volunteer. You do not need to bring anything since the Festival provides the Business Band Transceivers.

It's fun for the family too. If you are interested in bringing the entire family, Mike Fung WA6AWI will provide a family pass for any SBARA member who signs up for a shift. If you haven't participated in the

past give it a try this year.

The festival is in Hayward and takes only a few hours of your time. The benefit is enormous for SBARA. Go to www.sbara.org and click on the flashing 'Hayward Zucchini Festival' in the menu bar for map to Kennedy Park. For signing up or if you have any questions, contact Al Rendon at (510) 656-2427 or by e-mail at wt6k@arrl.net.



The Groundplane

Tri-City VE Track Record

It might be a bit early, but with four sessions behind us, we're getting a glimmer of our progress and our impact.

Bernhard Hailer AE6YN collected some interesting statistics since our inception in March –

Number of candidates served: 48.

People are finding us. They come from as far away as Sacramento, a tiny town in the Central Valley, and San Francisco. When you're ready to test, you find the site.

We were uncertain about weekday night attendance, but it's been strong. Twelve people have showed up on both Thursday nights. People find it convenient to come by after work and not have testing interfere with Saturday family activities.

In June we added a question about how did you find us. One found us through the 25-25 SSB net and nine found us through the ARRL website.

Percent passed Technician Element 2: 100%

In spite of test anxiety, everyone appears to have studied. It is thrilling to hand that first CSCE to a candidate, shake their hand and bask in the achievement with them.

Percentage passed overall: 80%

When you add in the General Element 3 and Extra Element 4, the numbers drop. When you pass Technician, you can take General at no extra cost. People may not have studied, but figure they have nothing to lose. We're adjusting our tactics to be sure people feel they are ready to pass this Element. The Extra exam is tough. Many

people come in saying that they've already taken it multiple times or that they don't expect to pass. Some just want to see how difficult it is.

Candidates are commenting on our friendliness. The Congratulations Kit is supplying them with lots of information and the PTT station is getting them on the air immediately.

That's all because of our volunteers. Huge thanks to our VEs for learning forms, rules, grading flows, proctoring, and registration requirements. You are making a difference in people's lives.

In keeping with statistics, there have been **6 VEs who have attended all four sessions** to date: Robin Yee KI6YTA, Jon Gefaell K6OJ, Ken Parker KJ6ANR, Bernhard Hailer AE6YN, Dan Curtis N6WN and myself. Kudos to all and 73,

Rita Derbas KI6SSQ



The Groundplane

Why are HF Bands So Quiet?

There are two reasons for H.F. bands to be dead, both arising from two very different conditions. High absorption is usually cited as the main reason....especially if such conditions are observed during the daylight and/or during high solar activity. Very seldom is the reason put forth that there just might be NO IONOSPHERE!

In fact, it is IMPOSSIBLE to know from ground based observations alone whether high absorption or low ionization is the cause of no propagation....both will have exactly the same effect. The only REAL way to know is from topside sounding...that is ionospheric sounding from ABOVE the ionosphere. Unfortunately such data is difficult to come by. (This may change soon with some of the new scientific satellites becoming more available to the public)

How can one have no ionosphere in the middle of a solar storm?

Location, location, location. It's not called a solar WIND for nothing. There can be HUGE numbers of ions that don't do you any good, because they're literally BLOWN to useless regions of the sky....a common occurrence in the Arctic region. The Auroral oval has MONSTROUS levels of ionization, but is very seldom useful for H.F.

propagation, because it is so disturbed. The Auroral oval is not a LAYER of ions; its a screaming torrent of ions. Or in more cosmic terms, it's an ACCRETION zone of ions. The acceleration of these ions is so huge it dwarfs any effect that our puny radio signals might have. Remember, reflection is caused by acceleration of charges...but if the NATURAL acceleration of these charges is already immense, man made radio signals are insignificant.

Up here...especially during the Midnight Sun, it's easy to forget that the Aurora happens all year long....you only SEE it during the winter...but radar shows it live and kicking just about any time.

To make radio happen, you need not just a lot of ions, but a lot of ORGANIZED and relatively QUIESCENT ions. (Actually it's the electrons that do the work...however, when the ions are disturbed, so are their associated electrons. The ions serve to keep a rein on the electrons in "normal" propagation conditions. Without the ions, the free electrons would just wander merrily off into space.)

Eric, KL7AJ

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SBARAs Field Day



The Groundplane

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John, W0IG, Mgr.
denver@hamradio.com

NEW LOCATION!

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(800) 444-9476
Gary, N7GJ, Mgr.
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6071 Buford Hwy., 30340
(770) 263-0700
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atlanta@hamradio.com

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(703) 643-1063
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Steve, W4SHG, Mgr.
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The Groundplane

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Founded 1974
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Web Site — www.sbara.org

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Fremont Repeaters & Net Information

WA6PWW -	147.015 +600Khz, PL 103.5
WA6PWW -	223.900 -500Khz, PL 107.2
WA6PWW -	442.600 +5Mhz, PL 107.2
K6AIR -	146.940 -600Khz, PL 123.0
K6AIR -	441.525 +5Mhz, PL 123.0
ARES -	Tuesday @ 7:30pm - 147.015 + PL 103.5

SBARA Meeting Location

Our meeting location is at
 Hurricane Electric.

The address in Fremont is:

760 Mission Court — Come to the meeting.
 Bring your HF transceiver, antenna) or HT !

Talk-In 147.015Mhz. +600

Also consider joining us at Wok City Diner
 for Dinner at 6PM

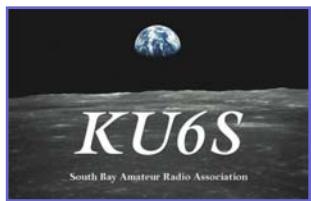
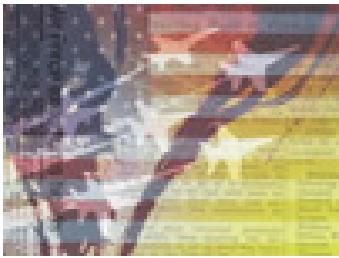
Mingle with your fellow SBARA members

The **South Bay Amateur Radio Association** is a general interest amateur radio club serving the Fremont Tri-City area. The club has been in existence since 1974, and has functioned continuously ever since. We are an ARRL Special Service Club, a California not-for-profit tax exempt organization as specified in IRS Stat-

utes. We sponsor training for new hams, license examination sessions, and participate in various public service events. If you have a specialized amateur radio interest, chances are you can share it with one or more of our club members.

SBARA meets on the 2nd Friday of every month at Hurricane Electric in Fre-

mont, California. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM. After conducting business, coffee and snacks are served while we socialize. Following the break, a program of interest will be presented. All persons interested in amateur radio are invited to attend. Families are welcome. We hope to see you there!



Announcements

**SBARA's July meeting is the 9th.
Our meeting location is at
Hurricane Electric. The address in
Fremont is:
760 Mission Court Fremont, Ca.

Come to the meeting and
bring your;
Go Pack, HF Rig, HT, and
Antennas!!**

The Ground Plane — KU6S
<http://www.sbara.org>
South Bay Amateur Radio Association —
SBARA
P.O. Box 8401
Fremont, Ca. 94537-8401